



## Snohomish County

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### County Council

Nate Nehring, Chair  
Megan Dunn, Vice-Chair  
Sam Low  
Jared Mead  
Strom Peterson

County Executive  
Dave Somers

January 29, 2025

Honorable Members of The House  
Honorable Members of The Senate

The Snohomish County Council and Executive would like to convey our support of establishing a state funding source to support the aviation units supporting Washington law enforcement and search and rescue units. Snohomish County, as well as King, Chelan, and Spokane Counties, operate significant aviation units that provide statewide support for search and rescue missions, disaster relief, and other law enforcement purposes, including missing persons searches.

These aviation units offer critical services within their jurisdictions and to agencies across the state, yet the financial responsibility for operating these units falls solely on the operating agencies and their tax bases. There is a significantly higher demand for air support than can currently be provided, with funding identified as a major underlying issue affecting pilot availability, training, and maintenance resources. Increased funding would ensure proper maintenance, operation, and potential expansion of these aviation units, thereby enhancing their ability to provide robust responses across Washington for law enforcement and search and rescue purposes.

During the June Legislative Committee meeting, members of the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) from agencies without aviation units expressed their reliance on and their desire for increased support from existing aviation units rather than establishing their own units.

A minimum of \$2.4 million in annual funds has been proposed to meet existing needs, with a conceptual solution of establishing a \$10 million annual funding source to be allocated based on need and priority to maintain and expand aviation unit availability and responsiveness.

1. The Snohomish County Council and Executive support the establishment of a state funding source to support the aviation units that provide critical services for law enforcement and search and rescue missions across Washington State.

2. The Snohomish County Council and Executive urge the Washington State Legislature to allocate a minimum of \$10 million annually to be distributed among agencies operating aviation units, according to need and priority, to ensure the continued maintenance, operation, and expansion of these essential services.
3. The Snohomish County Council and Executive will forward copies of this letter to the Governor of Washington, the Washington State Legislature, and the WASPC.

Sincerely,



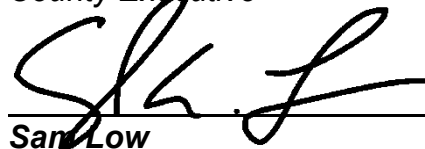
**Nate Nehring**  
Council Chair



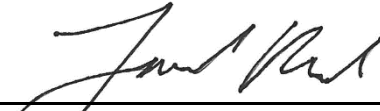
**Dave Somers**  
County Executive



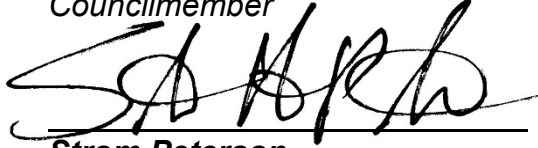
**Megan Dunn**  
Council Vice-Chair



**Sam Low**  
Councilmember



**Jared Mead**  
Councilmember



**Strom Peterson**  
Councilmember

cc: Governor of Washington  
Washington State Legislature  
WASPC